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War and the Cholera.

BY REV. CHARLES F. DOLE

What I wish to show is that war is like the cholera. War, men generally say, is one of the great perennial facts of the world—a sort of “institution,” with its hereditary vested rights, to continue on the earth, and to break out from time to time and demand its toll in blood and treasure. The nations must always be ready for war. They must keep up vast armies and build bigger ships and cast heavier cannon and tax themselves in view of the constant threat of war as they are taxed for no other object, as they would not dream of being taxed for education or any other means of civilization, as they would scorn to be taxed to pay tribute to any despot. They cheerfully pay the gigantic taxes of war at the rate of thousands of millions in a single year, and they ask no questions. Is not this tax, they imagine, a part of the regular and constituted order of the world? Do not kings and noblemen and congressmen and presidents tell us that this is “all right”? Does not a great and powerful military and naval caste live upon the expectation of war? Do not ministers of religion believe in the necessity of war as they hardly believe in the Golden Rule, and stand ready with prepared texts to show the compatibility of fighting with the precepts of the New Testament? Does not God himself send war upon the nations as one of his appointed angels of chastisement?

To all this we are bound to say, *No*. The fact is, mankind looked upon the existence of the cholera and other plagues and filth diseases in precisely the same way as they have looked upon the necessity of war up to the present time. Indeed, they still look upon the plague in the East in this time-honored and barbarous way. They say that God “sends” the disease to punish men for their sins. So our fathers used to expect epidemics as they expected an occasional eclipse of the sun. They used to build hospitals and inoculate a whole population with smallpox. Of course many would die in the process. They used to look for the coming of the cholera and expect to sacrifice a holocaust of children’s lives to the monster. Doctors at best could only mitigate the fury of the disease. Was not the cholera a part of the constituted and continuous order of nature?

What a wonderful new science of medicine it is that denies the traditions of all the world and is almost prepared, at least in the case of certain terrible ancient plagues, to rule them altogether out of existence. This new science does not so much fight the plague or the cholera; it proposes to give the disease no spot to live in. It does not get ready any longer to take the smallpox; it forbids the smallpox. It forbids typhoid fever. It even marches on and promises, if the public will co-operate, to stamp out consumption. It is more religious than the clergy, for it denies that God wills disease. God wills health. “Obey his laws of life,” says the new science, “keep your streets and your homes clean, abolish filthy slum districts, breathe pure air and drink pure water, and you need not be afraid of disease. Cease to live in the thought of disease and live in the expectation of health.” Who thinks of the danger, much less the necessity, of cholera any longer?

Can any one believe in the new science of medicine,

and be so dull as not to see where this teaching carries us? If the divine will is that we shall not permit the curse of the cholera, does any one suppose that the world is doomed to sit down content to bear the vaster pest of war? The time is coming fast when all the old-fashioned “pious” and conventional talk about the “necessity” of occasional war will be thought preposterous. Why should civilized society indulge in an occasional war any more than in an orgy of smallpox?

We have learned that disease is a confession of some sort of physical weakness, of more or less gross negligence. The fever breaks out because the health officers have been asleep, or the water company has cared more for dividends than for human life. The fever comes because people have taken poison into their bodies. We have accumulated costly experience enough to demonstrate that war likewise is the confession of the weakness of the nations which fight. Do not say that “Christendom” has wars on its hands. Tell the truth, that Christendom is still pagan and barbarous, and therefore the wars break out. Do not say that the “Christian nation” of Germany or the United States must keep up colossal armaments, whether military or naval. Confess frankly that Germany or the United States is not Christian or civilized yet, or it would no more think of having a war than a clean and healthy community thinks of taking the cholera.

Let us prove what we are saying with respect to any war which one can name. No one, for instance, can doubt that the Mexican War was a confession on the part of the United States of moral weakness, as if she had proclaimed to the world: We are not Christians; we are not civilized people. We all have to admit this of the Mexican War. How now about the Civil War? Was not that quite “Christian”? some one asks. The very issue out of which it arose was African slavery, a survival of barbarism. Neither would slavery have existed at the South, had it not existed also for a long period in Massachusetts and Rhode Island; had not ships gone out from Northern ports to bring fresh supplies of slaves almost up to the outbreak of the war; had not greed of gain North and South drugged the conscience of the nation.

Will any one glory in the late Spanish War? I call it pathetic that we should have hastened to fight with one of the feeblest nations of Europe. I call that day a disgrace to American civilization, when Congressmen threw up their hats on the occasion of the declaration of war. Does any one imagine that this was the conduct of civilized or mature or “Christian” men? If the late war had to be, it ought to have been inaugurated with fasting and sorrow, and with the national flag at half-mast for the grief of a humane people over a humiliating task. We know now from the official papers of our Minister at Madrid that a little more patience, a little sympathy with the Spanish people as well as the Cubans, a chivalrous willingness to tax ourselves to buy Cuba for her people rather than to fight for it, would have made the whole sorrowful story of this war unnecessary. It looks, too, as if this course would have set an object-lesson to make the Boer War also impossible!

But at least, men cry, the American Revolution was a holy war. I am not saying that noble men were not in it, on both sides. I am not denying the good conscience

of our fathers who fought. The war doubtless had to be, as men were at that time full of prejudices, of hot blood, of arrogance and revenge. The war had to be, not because the England and America of the eighteenth century were "Christian," but because there were so few men of peace and goodwill among both peoples, that they did not know how to settle their differences like human beings, and they fell back upon the method of the brutes. Let us put our praise in the right place. Let us praise the courage of doctors and the patience of nurses. Let us not call the fever glorious or bring up our children to wish to see the fever again for the sensational sight of what the nurses and the doctors have to do. Let us not boast of the number of surgical instruments we keep in the house.

Yes, men may say; but this is a barbarous world. Must we not then be prepared to defend ourselves against the ignorant people who everywhere threaten to bring in their pests and plagues from over the border? If England were civilized, and Germany and the South American States, we might afford to disarm ourselves and become Christians too. But really we cannot quite trust in God enough to be civilized Christians in this actual world.

To this I answer from the teaching of the new medicine. If I take the fever or the cholera, this is not because some one else has it, so much as because I have been unwary enough to admit the poison into my system. Not a whole sick neighborhood would have given me the fever if I had not given it admittance to my own body. It is indeed a peril when the pestilence is abroad, and I must doubtless take extra precautions. I must keep my body and my house cleaner than ever and watch against infection.

So precisely when the fever of war is abroad among the nations. This fact constitutes a serious peril. How shall we be prepared to meet it? By building new warships, say some, and erecting cannon on the coast and organizing a navy association. The whole history of the world proves that there is no more insidious mode of infection of the military fever into the body of the nation than through the sight of military display and the stirring of the pride of brass buttons and battle flags.

What shall we do then in the midst of a fighting world? The one thing which the United States has the noblest opportunity ever given to a people to accomplish. We shall keep our hands and our hearts clean of injustice and greed. We shall build up the high moral health of the nation with the life-blood of humanity and sympathy. We shall be foremost in the use of the new science of international arbitrament, as, for example, by the Court at The Hague. We shall disarm hostility and suspicion by friendliness. We shall represent ourselves at the great capitals of the world by men of goodwill, true Americans by their kindness, justice and good sense. We shall rebuke the public man who utters evil thoughts of neighboring peoples as we rebuke the man who carries a plague in his garments. Be sure, if ever the war clouds arise between us and the nations over the seas, the main cause of mischief will not be the barbarism of the rival power; it will be the want of true enlightenment and civilization among ourselves in the Senate at Washington, in the people who elect Congressmen and Presidents.

The Human Conditions Which Make International Arbitration Inevitable.*

BY EVERETT D. BURR, D. D.

At a meeting held recently in Boston in commemoration of the centenary of the birth of Ralph Waldo Emerson, his son, Dr. Edward W. Emerson, gave a pleasant picture of the Concord home when Thoreau came in to play with the children about the hearth. There was a young man conferring with Mr. Emerson as to whether or not he had better give his time the next few years to a college education. Dr. Emerson said that his father had the conviction that there might be many ways to heaven, but he was quite sure that one of them went by Harvard College, and so he advised the young man to go to Harvard, saying pleasantly, "I feel sure that they teach most of the branches there." Whereupon Thoreau interposed the remark: "Yes; all the branches, but none of the roots!"

Leaving out Mr. Thoreau's sarcasm, I should like to use his figure and remind the Conference that in the report of Dr. Trueblood we have seen the growth of the cause of arbitration. Here it stands beautiful, umbrageous, ramified, until it includes within its reach thirty-seven great nations. It is well for us in looking at its widely ramified growth to remind ourselves that there are some deep roots out of which this growth and larger life matures. Therefore, in following up what Dr. Trueblood has said, it seemed to me that while I could not speak technically I might take your hearts with me into a moment's reflection as to what are at least these deeply human conditions which make international arbitration inevitable in the near future. For our hopefulness I venture to suggest some of these.

First of all, we are living, I think, in a time which might be characterized as a time of *contemporaneous humanity*. There are no more any foreign lands; we have a closer feeling toward remote communities than our forefathers had toward their fellowmen who lived in the next town. We are in the midst of conditions that remind us that there are no distant peoples. That which goes on in the courts of kings and that which is decided in the legislatures of republics comes to us with the morning news. The seas which used to separate nation from nation are now bridged by the fast-going ships, and they are tunnelled by the cables. There was a time when nations conceived of themselves as parts of an archipelago, thinking that they were only remotely, if at all, related to each other, but it has been discovered in these later times that there is no such thing as isolation, that underneath the fluent seas there are the great ribs of a continent that make the peoples one. These nerve lines of cable communication are not dull, insensate threads, but they are the very nerves of the intercommunication and the interpenetration of life, so that the heart-beat of one nation echoes in the bosom of every other nation in the world.

Then out of this contemporaneousness of humanity has grown what we might term a *community of interests*. The conception of humanity as an organism in which part ministers to part and the sufficiency of some supplies the lack of others is pressed home upon us with every

* Address at the Lake Mohonk Arbitration Conference, May 27, 1903.